

FIGHTING TALK

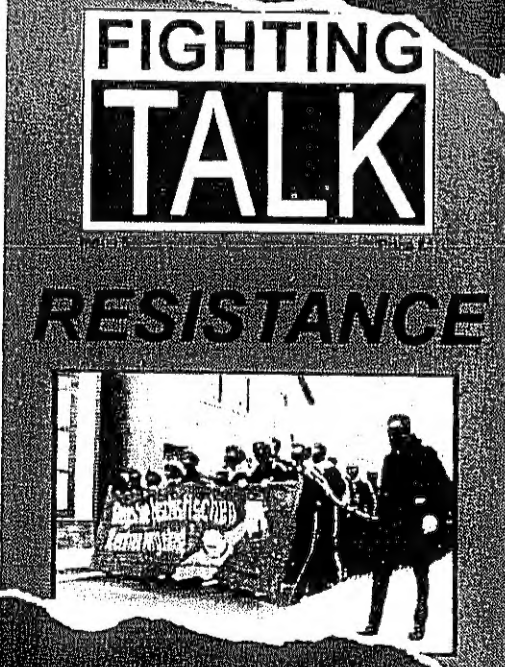
Issue 12

Price £1

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1995

Anti-Fascist
Action

★INSIDE★

3 In the Area...

AFA news from around the country.

5 Levelling the Score...

Tackling fascism at football.

8 10 Years on...

A decade of militant anti-fascism.

10 A View from Valhalla...

"Stumpy Neck" and Resistance Records.

12 Free Poster!

Because we're generous.

15 Filling the Vacuum...

London AFA's arguments for a new strategy.

18 Behind Enemy Lines...

FT parachutes into enemy territory.

19 Germany Calling...

Autonome Antifa (M)'s regular piece.

20 Anti-fascist History...

The 1936 Olympics, Berlin versus Barcelona.

22 Reviews...

TAL's Celtic Hammer on Ken Loach's 'Land and Freedom'.

23 AFA Merchandise.

JOIN AFA

In the fight against fascism in Britain, Anti-Fascist Action has a record that is second to none. Our unique combination of physical confrontation and ideological struggle has produced results time and again.

We say no platform for fascists - no meetings, no marches, no paper sales, no leafleting - and we mean it, as the fascists know only too well. Our aim is to cause the maximum disruption to fascist activities.

But that doesn't mean that AFA only needs street-fighters. Far from it. Everyone has a role to play in AFA, whether they feel confident in physical confrontations or not.

None of our successes in physically confronting the fascists would have been possible without the contribution of non-combatants. From legal observers to scouts, from leafleters to people who can write articles or speak at meetings, AFA needs people with a whole range of skills if it is to continue to succeed.

There's a lot to do, so don't wait around. Join today.

Contact your local group for affiliation rates and activities.

AFA CONTACTS

Cardiff AFA
c/o Wolverhampton AFA

Chesterfield AFA
c/o Nottingham AFA

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PO Box 85,
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Leicester LE1 5WS

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Nottingham NG1 1FJ

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Birmingham B12 9RL

Bolton AFA
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Huddersfield HD1 3YL

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PO Box 63, Lancaster LA1 3GP

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Liverpool AFA
PO Box 110, Liverpool L69 8DP

Manchester AFA
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Manchester M15 5NJ

Preston AFA
PO Box 172, Preston PR1 7BE

Teeside AFA
PO Box 1TA,
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Sheffield AFA
c/o Black Star,
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4, The Cloth Market,
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C/o Manchester AFA

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PO Box 306, York YO3 7GH

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PO Box 421
Edinburgh EH11 1QD

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Box 44, c/o Greenleaf Bookshop,
82 Colston St, Bristol.

Colchester AFA
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Colchester CO4 4NQ

Exeter AFA
c/o The Flying Post, PO Box 185
Exeter EX4 4EW

Gloucester AFA
c/o Bath AFA

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London WC1N 3XX

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PO Box 73
Norwich NR3 1QD

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BCM Box 1715,
London WC1N 3XX

Plymouth AFA
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Portsmouth AFA,
Southampton AFA,
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PO Box 3355, Dublin 7, Ireland

Autonome Antifa (M)
Buchladen Rote Straße
Rote Straße 10
37073 Göttingen
Germany

APPEAL FOR INFORMATION

WE URGE ALL OUR READERS TO SEND ANY INFORMATION ON FASCISTS IN THEIR AREA DIRECT TO AFA. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GUARANTEE THE MILITANT ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT HAS THE NECESSARY INFORMATION TO SUCCESSFULLY BEAT THE FASCISTS.

IN THE AREA

Welcome to Issue 12 of **Fighting Talk**. As usual, the magazine opens with the essential AFA update **IN THE AREA**, a round-up of news and views from the front line of the fight against the fascists.

MIDLANDS

Once again Midlands AFA have been at the forefront of recent events. Acting on 'information received', an AFA stewards group had assembled in a pub in Birmingham. Because it was a Saturday there was some early confusion as to who this group were, initially being mistaken for a football firm. Oldham thought they were Villa, Villa thought they were Blues. The Blues knew it was AFA but weren't sure who they were after - and finally the main course arrived. This was a fascist Villa firm, 40 strong, and led by well-known local fascist Tony Burke. The fascists got battered all over the place, which is the first serious reverse they've suffered since getting geed up by the England 'riot' in Dublin back in February.

It has become increasingly difficult for militant anti-fascists to operate on the streets as the police continue to criminalise AFA. Back in April, Midlands AFA mobilised to stop a BNP leafletting taking place in Kirkby, only to be confronted by a heavy police presence. When AFA refused to disperse, they were baton charged by the police, leaving one activist with his leg broken in five places, while the BNP were allowed to continue their activity. Again AFA tried to get at the fascists only to come under another heavy police attack leading to further injuries. The AFA group was then held in the middle of the road for an hour while the fascists were allowed to scuttle away.

EDINBURGH

Similarly, in Scotland 10 Anti-fascists were arrested in Edinburgh on Saturday, June 3rd, after encounters with fascists, loyalists and the police. Anti-Fascist Action had mobilised supporters from Scotland and the north-east of England to oppose the proposed BNP/Loyalist counter-demonstration aimed at stopping the James Connolly Commemoration in Edinburgh. Despite large numbers of fascists and loyalists being arrested, it was only the anti-fascists who were

charged and held in St. Leonard's police station over the weekend.

The police operation which led to the arrests of the AFA members is seriously suspect. As the AFA contingent was making its way towards the march, they were attacked by more than a dozen men. By the casual nature of their dress and their aggressive attitude, it was instantly assumed that they were fascists. The anti-fascists defended themselves against this attack. It was only when their attackers appeared to be taking second prize that they apparently decided to 'break cover' and identified themselves as police officers. According to press reports, four police officers were hospitalised as a result of this incident. Ten anti-fascists were arrested and charged with "Police Assault," "Resisting Arrest" and "Breach of the Peace." A solicitor acting for one of the defendants has told him that, if found guilty, he can expect to serve a jail term of between 18 months and 3 years.

While the anti-fascists were closely monitored, prevented from confronting the main fascist mob, and finally attacked and arrested, the same cannot be said for the fascists. No action was taken when two young lads got battered for wearing Celtic tops and the fascists were allowed to attack the march. Even those arrested were released without charge. The police's role on the day was far from neutral, and further serves to undermine the arguments of those who call for more state intervention against the extreme Right.

Edinburgh AFA has launched a defence campaign, see the advert on this page for details.

DUBLIN: The 'Invent A Nazi League'

The juvenile antics of the Socialist Workers Movement/Anti Nazi League (Ireland), with their pointless marches and petitions; have always been ignored by AFA in Ireland. However, in the aftermath of the Lansdowne Road 'riot', Socialist Worker again revived the ANL, calling a march to "Keep Ireland Nazi Free" over two months after the Ireland v. England match. This sudden interest in fascists at football was merely a new bandwagon for the ANL to jump on, as

they had nobody at Lansdowne and their 'analysis' was based solely on newspaper reports. AFA was the only anti-fascist group with a presence at the match.

As part of the publicity hype for their Saturday afternoon stroll through Dublin the ANL created a 'nazi menace' that does not exist with a view to boosting numbers attending the rally. In the end this ploy totally collapsed, with ordinary people ignoring the rally.

Three days before the march the Evening Herald, Ireland's largest evening paper, carried a front page headline "Nazis Target City's Blacks, Fascist jobs in vicious terror drive", over a story fed to the paper by the ANL. It claimed that a "group of North Inner city paramilitary skinheads" were running a "reign of fear" to drive Black families out of Dublin. A spokesperson for the ANL claimed that "It is an organised campaign by a group of skinheads who have swastika tattoos on their arms and dress in military gear."

This fantasy stemmed from a number of racist slogans which had been painted on walls in the Blessington Street area of Dublin. The graffiti, which had appeared six weeks before the story, was immediately painted out by members of AFA. Through our contacts in the area AFA was aware of the isolated nature of the incident and that there was no involvement of organised fascists. The ANL knew that AFA had removed the graffiti and they also know that there are no organised Nazis in Dublin; AFA beat them off the streets in the late '80s.

Edinburgh AFA Defence Campaign

10 Anti-fascist demonstrators were arrested after being attacked by plain clothed police officers in Edinburgh on June 3rd (see above). Leaflets are available from Edinburgh AFA, and donations should be sent to Edinburgh AFA, PO Box 421, Edinburgh EH11 1QD

AFA ROUND-UP

It is no surprise to AFA that the ANL/SWM will use any cynical, ineffective or childish ploy to aid recruitment, but this incident goes far beyond their usual standard of dishonesty and lies. This is a serious matter. The ANL are attempting to create a group of nazis, where none exists, to justify having a campaign against them. The one or two racist morons who wrote the graffiti will be delighted at making nation-wide publicity and more graffiti has since appeared.

The night before the rally a debate between AFA and the ANL had been organised by a Dublin radio station, 98FM. Shortly before going on the air the AFA spokesperson was informed that the ANL representative had pulled out of the discussion. The result was a ten minute plug for AFA and several listeners phoned in to commend AFA. From not having the bottle to confront the nazis the ANL now refuses to debate with anti-fascists.

LEEDS

While the situation in Yorkshire remains as confused as ever, we were pleased to hear that militant anti-fascists have responded to the recent wave of fascist attacks in that area. A van load of BNP members, on their way to a 'secret' meeting, ran straight into an anti-fascist ambush and got well and truly splattered. This sort of action puts pressure on the fascists, who have to operate more and more secretly to avoid attack - making them more and more isolated. If militant anti-fascists have the information, fascist activities can be stopped or disrupted.

BLACKPOOL

The exact opposite to what happened in Leeds is the recent situation in Blackpool, where by withholding information a major fascist activity was allowed to go ahead unhindered. The C18/NSA meeting in July passed off without incident because the details of the meeting were deliberately withheld from AFA, while at the same time being given to local Special

Branch - effectively vetoing any action against the fascists.

While AFA militants from the Northern Network had been active in Blackpool previously, causing some serious problems for the BNP candidate in the May elections, there has never been a Blackpool branch. In May '95 Searchlight magazine included a Blackpool AFA branch in their list of contacts, despite no such branch being recognised by AFA. This group's refusal to pass information over to AFA, their dealings with Special Branch, and their opposition to the most basic AFA principles is why the Northern Network (AFA) has said that militant anti-fascists should have nothing to do with them. Once again we have to state that the only bona fide list of AFA groups appears in *Fighting Talk*.

WEST LONDON

One of the few areas where the BNP have maintained a semi-public profile is around Feltham, on the West London/Surrey border. Sporadic BNP paper sales and leafleting over the last year led up to Warren Glass standing in a local election in August. During the run-up to the election, there was a clash between AFA and the BNP in Feltham High St., and despite the fact 30 or 40 BNP supporters came piling out of the Moon On The Square pub, throwing bottles and glasses, once again it was the militant anti-fascists who suffered all the arrests and police harassment.

At the count a few days later, there were further disturbances as a combined BNP/C18 team attacked the ANL counter-demo. In the aftermath of the violence, the BNP candidate Warren Glass (who came 4th with 119 votes - 4.42%) was quoted in the Evening Standard as saying "it has nothing to do with me. I have no idea what's happened." Glass's "unfamiliarity" with fascist violence can clearly be seen in the photograph below, which shows him (far right) leading a

Anti Fascist Machine

To find out more about
Anti-Fascist Action

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Nottingham

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All contact is in the strictest confidence

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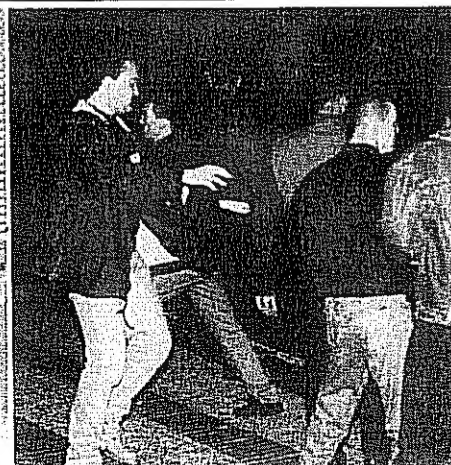
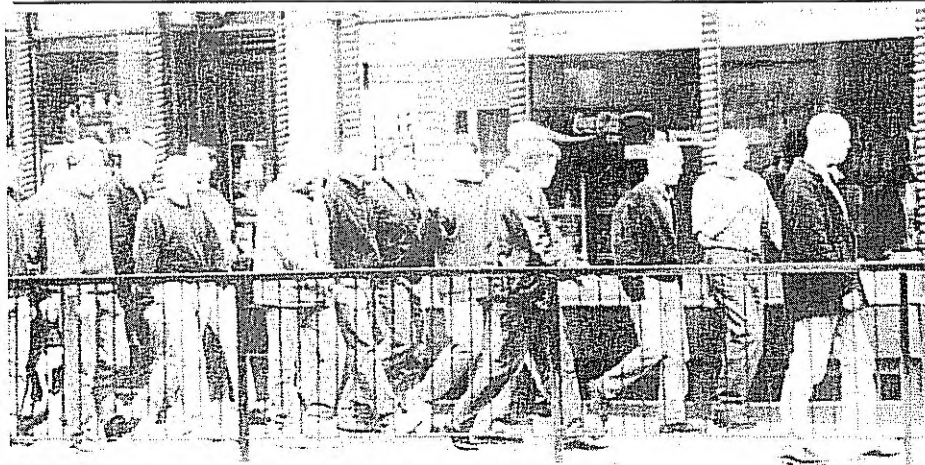
group of C18 stewards for UVF march
through Central London, in April this year.

HATE MAIL

Producing a magazine can at times be a hard and unrewarding job, so it always cheers us up to receive the anonymous little messages the fascists find time to send us. The best one recently was an AFA sticker sent to us covered in fairly conventional right-wing slogans, but included the classic line "Mensi pisses the bed"!

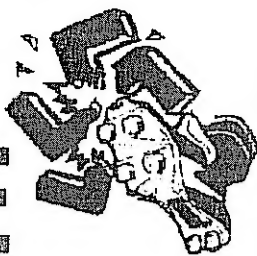
KENT

And finally, we are pleased to announce the formation of a new branch in Kent. Kent AFA now replaces the previous contact address which was the Kent Anti-Fascist Action Committee (KAFAC). KAFAC and AFA have worked well together in the past, but KAFAC doesn't share the same analysis as AFA, and while this is an amicable separation, it seemed sensible to establish a separate AFA group that will fully participate in the activities and structures of National AFA. Undoubtedly we will work with KAFAC in the future, but all AFA supporters should contact Kent AFA, c/o BM1734, London WC1N 3XX.



Left: Warren Glass (far right) and other West London BNP/C18 activists steward UVF march, London, April '95
Right: West London BNP/C18 activists attack the ANL outside the election count, Hounslow, August '95.

LEVELLING THE SCORE



International links between anti-fascist football supporters are now a reality. In this issue we look at the solid anti-fascist support of Athletic Bilbao, St. Pauli supporters give us their views of attempts to organise anti-fascist fans in Germany, and Celtic supporters beat the fascists in Birmingham. Talking of Celtic, their reputation is such nowadays, that when Paris St. Germain came to Glasgow for the 2nd leg of their Cup Winners Cup game in early November, any dubious looking French supporters who were pulled, immediately replied "no, no, I'm not fascist!"

Athletico Bilbao

Herri Norte Taldea (HNT) is an Athletic Bilbao supporters club and this interview originally appeared in the St. Pauli fanzine 'Der Übersteiger'

Why do you support Athletic Bilbao?

It is part of the culture and the life of the town. It's the team of the people here - it's got the most titles and the most fans in the Basque Country. In addition, many militant anti-fascists from all over Spain identify with the values which Athletic represents.

Tell us something about the history of the club.

Football came to Bilbao through sailors from northern England. In 1898 Athletic Bilbao was formed out of the fusion of two teams: Bilbao and Athletic. Since 1913 we've been playing at the San Mames stadium, known as "The Cathedral." Since then we've won 8 championships and 23 Cup competitions. In 1977 we beat Juventus in the UEFA Cup Final. Ever since the start of the Championship we've been in the first division. If Athletic get into a cup final, 50,000 fans go into the bars in Madrid.

Why do only Basque players play for Athletic, and what do you think about that?

It's the best way to unite the fans and the team and to promote football in the region (every kid dreams of playing for Athletic). If all clubs acted in the same way, there'd be millions less spent and there'd be a better feeling. It does hold back many opportunities for competing at a high level, but we're proud of our approach. It is unique in the world.



Do you support the Spanish national side?
Euskal Herria, that is to say the Basque Country, is our country. Basque fans are fighting for a Basque national side to be able to take part in the European Championship or the World Cup, but Spain and France won't allow it. The fact of the matter is that the Spanish national eleven reflects a situation which none of us accepts: the unity of Spain.

Is there a lot of rivalry between yourselves and other Basque sides like Real Sociedad or Osasuna?

There's always been a lot of rivalry, but lately it has been getting worse: lots of punch ups, especially in San Sebastian (Donostia in the Basque language). In order to stop this a united fan club for all Basque fans, Euskal Hintxak, was formed, which is made up mostly of groups

of young fans. Before every match between two Basque clubs there is a demonstration by fans of both clubs.

Are there only Skins in the fan club?

The Skins are the ones who mainly put out the Anti Ultra fanzine, but HNT is made up of Skins, Punks, people into Hardcore, Kids, piss heads, and 'normal' boys and girls. At the ground, we're the group with the most girls. And we're the group with the biggest number of anti-racist Skins in the whole of Spain, including our Madrid section which has 30 Skins.

Who are your biggest rivals?

Real Madrid are the biggest bastards. The majority of the officials and fans there are fascists or ultra-conservatives, and their players are pigs. And we've got enemies - fascists - in all towns. But we've also got lots of friends, which is more important.

What's the situation with fascists in the Basque Country?

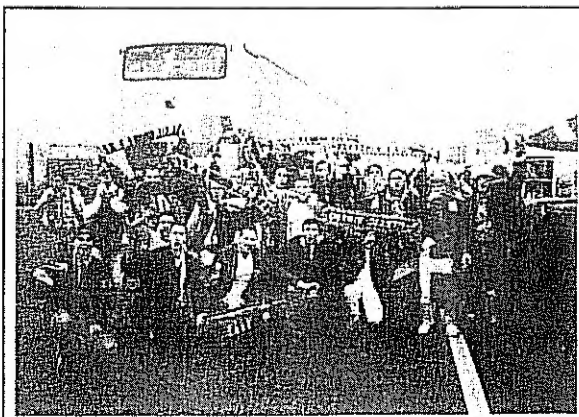
They exist, but there's no way they have any real strength. We never see them. In Bilbao there's a gang of 10 Boneheads, who don't give us any trouble. They just hang about in their own holes, and if they do venture out, they normally end up in hospital. The biggest problem is the attacks on independence fighters by the Spanish state, financed with dirty money.

What about the struggle for Basque independence? Do you have anything to do with that?

Our group is only a fan club. The only politics we get involved in is anti-racism. Some of our members also belong to militant independence organisations, in the same way as there are Anarchists in our ranks. Most of us are for an independent Basque Country.

Any last words?

We invite all anti-fascist fans to write to us and to come and have a few beers with us in Bilbao. Greetings to all fans from Türkiyemspor Berlin, LöwenZahn, Glasgow Celtic and Ireland. Thanks a lot for your interest.



A contribution from the editor of the St. Pauli Fanzine 'Der Übersteiger' on current developments in the German anti-fascist football fan's alliance BAFF.

HOT BAFF!

Before BAFF was founded it was the fans of FC St. Pauli/Hamburg who had been doing organized anti-fascist work in the football scene. This was done by work in the club, leafletting, fanzines and concrete actions and turned out to be very successful. Now, fascism and racism at FC St. Pauli are not worth mentioning anymore. Other clubs and their fans were full of praise for us (and the fascists hated our guts).



BAFF Conference, Summer 1994.

In January 1993, a "Football Fans against Fascism" rock-festival took place at Dusseldorf and we invited many people, fan-clubs and fanzines who seemed to be interested in regular anti-fascist work within the German football scene. On 30 January '93, fans from 16 clubs took part in a demonstration in memory of the 60th anniversary of Hitler's takeover of power and it was the noisy bunch of 200 football fans who attracted the most attention. During this weekend we discussed the possibility of further co-operation and had a good time as well.

At further meetings (in summer and winter of '93) we decided that BAFF should be an umbrella organisation for various, autonomous fan-initiatives and should provide communication for all fan groups involved as well. The reason is that the individual fan groups have different structures, opinions and political identities. For example one half of fans is ready to take violent actions against fascists in football grounds while the other half strictly refuse. As a result we agreed that every group is free to make it's own decisions.

Nevertheless, BAFF was also able to start joint campaigns which had the full

support of all groups involved like the planned Germany v. England friendly on 20 April 1994, Hitler's birthday. This match was going to be held at Hamburg Volksparkstadion but it caused huge protests in Hamburg (especially by fans of FC St. Pauli). This protest and a threat of a nationwide mobilisation of anti-fascists forced the Hamburg senate to cancel that game. Then Berlin wanted to hold this 'friendly'. As a result the protests grew and there was an attack on the headquarters of the Berlin Football Association. In the end it was the English FA who cancelled the game for safety's sake. This campaign was a huge success for us, but we must express our disappointment at the lack of co-operation by English anti-fascists

who did not do very much to support our campaign.

The first big conference was held in summer '94 at Dusseldorf. We welcomed about 200 fans from more than 30 Clubs and speakers from Scotland, England, the Netherlands and Italy. We also agreed a policy that should represent the interests of all football fans in Germany, not just the anti-fascist issue, but also the fight against the

commercialisation of football, the destruction of terraces and the pricing out of fans with lower incomes.

[There then followed a big argument about sexism which split the meeting (a full report appeared in FT No.9 - back issues are still available).]

This theoretical discussion [on sexism] put off many fans (especially the younger and politically inexperienced ones) who, now have no interest in further participation in BAFF.

The last big joint action took place in November 1994 as more than 200 fans from 26 clubs took part in a demonstration against the destruction of terraces that was held in front of the DFB headquarters at Frankfurt. This demonstration was a great success and encouraged us to organize a similar action in September '95 at Geneva (where the draw for the second round ties takes place).

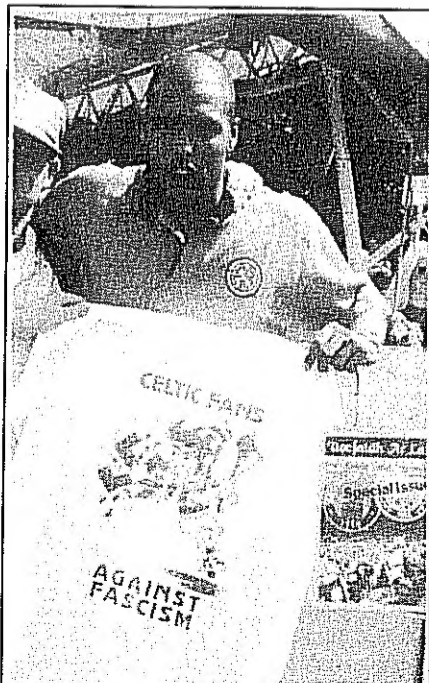
However, the greatest success BAFF achieved was that it brought many anti-fascist football fans from all clubs together who used to be isolated from each other. The fanzines with the highest circulation in Germany all emerged from the BAFF environment. We are a bit sceptical about the future but there is still hope. Finally greetings to TIOCAIDH AR LA and RED ATTITUDE.



Blood, Sweat & Tears

On Saturday, 29th July, 1995, thousands of Celtic fans converged on Birmingham to watch the Bhoys take on Birmingham City in a pre-season friendly match which ended in the home side winning 1-0. Before the match had even begun, there were clashes between the fascist-led Birmingham hooligans and Celtic supporters. Celtic supporters had been drinking in Birmingham's 'Irish Quarter', Digbeth, when they came under attack from a several hundred strong group of casuals and fascists. The attacking group appeared to be a united group of hooligans from various sides in Birmingham and the West Midlands and under the leadership of well-known fascist organisers from the area. Obviously the nazis were intent on building upon their recent "success" in Dublin where they managed to have the friendly match between Ireland and England abandoned. Celtic Anti-Fascists, casuals, and ordinary supporters had other ideas.

After initial surprise, Celtic supporters fought back and ran their attackers out of the area. Clashes continued throughout the day and into the evening with the fascists and hooligans from Birmingham taking a thorough beating. Despite the violence being obviously inspired by the fascists, the Birmingham police decided to wade into the Celtic fans, whose actions had been of a purely defensive nature.



Celtic's "Big Pierre" Van Hooijdonk showing where his sympathies lie as he models the Celtic Anti-Fascists T-Shirt on Celtic's pre-season tour of Northern Germany.

At least four Celtic fans were treated for serious head injuries as a result of police baton charges. A BBC journalist was later quoted in the local press saying, "The police baton charged the Celtic fans for no reason."

Celtic fans' arrested complained of sectarian abuse by the police. One man was spat upon, had his nose bust open and was constantly referred to as a "Fenian bastard" by the police in the van which took him to the station. With England's finest fascists having taken a surprise beating, the police appeared prepared to make amends.

Inside Birmingham City's ground, the home support continued to taunt Celtic supporters with cries of "No Surrender to the IRA" and waving Red Hand flags at them. This so incensed Birmingham's Managing Director, Karen Brady, that at one point during the match, she left her seat in the director's box and snatched one of the offending flags from a Birmingham fan who had been waving it provocatively and giving Nazi Salutes. Ms. Brady, who hails from a London-Irish background herself, was later quoted as saying, "It had to be done and as no-one else seemed to be prepared to do it, I did it!"

Publicans were able to tell us that Irish bars in Birmingham had been approached at least two weeks before and warned to expect trouble from fascists and other hooligans who might be preparing attacks upon their bars and the Celtic fans. If the police had serious intelligence reports that there was likely to be fascist inspired violence, why did they fail to keep the fascists out of Digbeth - or do the Birmingham police have their own agenda regarding such matters?

In the end it was the magnificent supporters of Celtic who managed to turn the tables on the Nazis. It is clear that the fascist hooligans are using these games as practice for next year's European Championships to be held in England. The championships will not be a showdown between various international hooligan groups as they have been in the past. Rather, they will be a showdown between the forces of fascism and anti-fascism in Europe. We are in no doubt which side Celtic fans will be on and we are determined that the anti-fascists will win.



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ANTI-FASCIST ACTION

— 10 YEARS ON —



Ten years ago 300 people met in a Central London hall to discuss setting up a new anti-fascist organisation. The result was the formation of Anti-Fascist Action, "to oppose racism and fascism physically on the streets and ideologically."

Since the Anti-Nazi League was closed down by the Socialist Workers Party in 1981, there was no national organisation to co-ordinate anti-fascist opposition, despite the increasing number of racist attacks and on-going targeting of left-wing activities. There were small groups of anti-fascists around the country, but these were isolated and coming under increasing pressure from the police. AFA was formed to end the isolation and draw in larger numbers to the anti-fascist movement. Initially the alliance of 'liberals' and 'militants' in AFA achieved results, certainly anti-fascism was put back on the public agenda, and victories over the NF at Stockport (1985) and

Bury St. Edmunds (1986), followed by the successful campaign to finish off the NF Remembrance Day parades in Central London, showed our ability to disrupt the fascists and gave anti-fascists increasing confidence.

One of the things AFA has learnt is that effective anti-fascism doesn't mean rigidly applying a set formula; tactics and strategies need to adapt to changing circumstances. By 1989 AFA started to define itself as the militant wing of the anti-fascist movement. We moved away from protest actions and calls for the government and police to lead the fight against fascism. We made it clear that we were not fighting fascism to defend the status quo but because fascism is reactionary, ultra-conservative, and anti-working class.

AFA's objective was to clear the fascists out of working class areas and create the space for a progressive alternative to be built. Armed with this new strategy AFA started to grow rapidly, and the successful action against the BNP's "Rights for Whites" campaign in East London (1990-91) was soon followed by significant victories in the North West of England, Scotland, and then the Midlands.

Once AFA had defined itself as 'militant anti-fascist' it was important to give the militants an independent voice. The AFA magazine, *Fighting Talk*, was launched

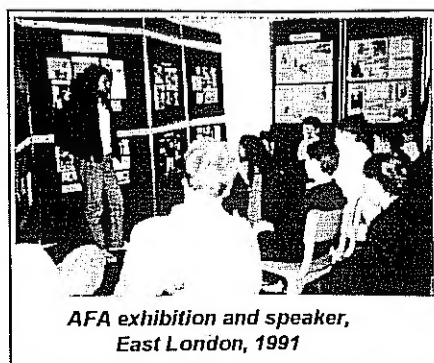


ANHREFN, Cable Street Beat gig, Manchester 1989.

to do this (1991) and the hard-hitting AFA video, also called *Fighting Talk*, was shown on BBC's *Open Space* in 1992, clearly showing the class nature of fascism and the need for militant opposition.

However 1992 also saw the arrival of 'the Left' into the anti-fascist arena, with the launch of the ANL, YRE and ARA. Despite having abandoned anti-fascism for over 10 years, these groups now decided they would 'lead' the movement. Their access to large amounts of money, and sections of the media, allowed them to 'flood the market' for a while, but in traditional 'left wing' style, once the money and recruits dry up, they jump onto another bandwagon. They have done considerable damage, though, for where AFA challenged the traditional 'left wing' stereotype (both politically and physically) they have simply presented soft targets and soft politics. Their support for Labour, in places like East London where Labour has presided over the area's decline for years, while not promoting any challenge from the Left, has merely helped the BNP present themselves as the 'radical' alternative.

The inability of the BNP to stage public events without severe disruption - from Burnley (1993) to Bloxwich (1994), St.



AFA exhibition and speaker, East London, 1991

UNSCREW SKREWDRIVER!



Assemble:
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QM Box 1724
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The leaflet that launched a thousand anti-fascists (1992).

Andrews Day (Glasgow 1991) to St. George's Day (Birmingham 1994) - has led them to declare there would be "... no more marches, meetings, punch-ups ..." (1994 Spearhead). This change of tactics by the BNP has presented AFA with a new challenge, for if the fascists have withdrawn from the physical arena, new forces need to be created to challenge them politically. The space that AFA has made hasn't been filled, and if it isn't filled by the Left, it will be filled by the Right. (See *Filling the Vacuum* article for more detail).

and so now their gigs are highly secretive and therefore less effective. AFA has also used music to spread the anti-fascist message, initially with Cable St. Beat, the Unity Carnivals (1991-93), and more recently the club-based Freedom of Movement.



While the BNP adopt a low-key electoral strategy at present, the threat of fascist violence has been taken up by C18. The exact nature of this threat remains to be seen, but they have recently taken control of the nazi music organisation Blood and Honour. Blood and Honour tried to operate openly but were smashed by AFA at Hyde Park Corner (1989) and the famous Battle of Waterloo (1992),

C18 is also involved in recruiting at football, and this challenge is being met by AFA, with supporters at Celtic, and then Man. Utd., giving a lead. European links are growing with the Hamburg club St. Pauli and Athletic Bilbao. AFA has developed international political contacts with many groups, especially in Europe and North America, and is actively involved in

ending the isolation of militant anti-fascist groups - this task being more urgent since the German state's attempts to criminalise and destroy the militants from Göttingen.

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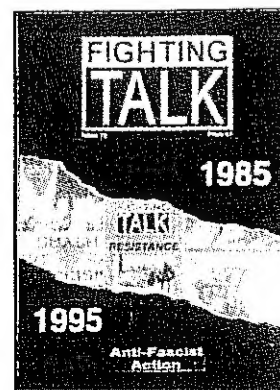
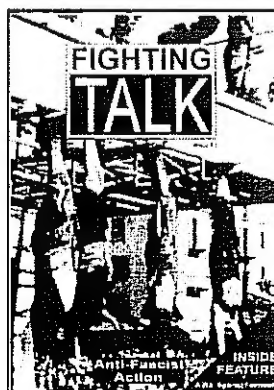
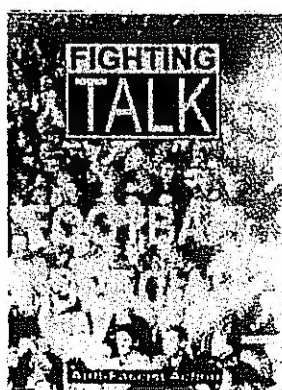
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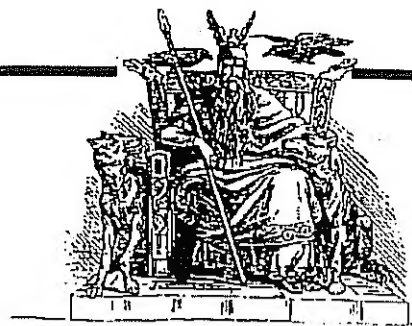
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A VIEW FROM VALHALLA



Having laid their wreaths and suitably sentimental messages at the spot where Ian Stuart died, the fascist faithful made their way to Caerphilly in South Wales, in late September, for this year's Ian Stuart memorial gig. The gig (booked as a wedding) attracted about 300 fascists, many from overseas. Things started to go wrong when the 'Warriors of the White Race' thought they spotted a load of 'reds' in a nearby pub and launched an assault. The 'reds', cunningly disguised as locals, were somewhat pissed off at this unwanted attention and I am pleased to report that the 'Bulldog Breed' got battered.

In the last issue of F/T I reported that the Ulster Democratic Party (political wing of the Ulster Freedom Fighters) ordered that posters advertising a Blood & Honour gig in Belfast had to be taken down. I have since heard that the gig did go ahead, featuring No Remorse (Mk 2), and was held on the Shankill Rd. So presumably B&H did have the backing of at least one of the established Loyalist political/paramilitary groups.

I would be interested to hear from any scooterists out there about B&H activity on the scooter scene. There has been evidence of this before and I was disturbed to hear about fascist 'activity' at a recent scooter rally in Portsmouth.

Many readers will have watched the 'World of Skinhead' programme on Channel 4 (6/10/95). I asked an anti-fascist skinhead what he thought of it. "The media, particularly the tabloid press, has built up the myth that if you're a skinhead you're automatically a nazi. 'World of Skinhead' went at least some way to break down this myth. Some of the skins interviewed were black, Asian, and Jewish - and Roddy of anti-fascist Oi band The Oppressed was excellent throughout, explaining that the skinhead cult grew out of a mixture of British working class and Jamaican cultures. He hit the nail right on the head when he said it wasn't politics that ruined the skinhead movement, it was fascist politics! Overall it gave a pretty fair reflection of the skinhead cult today."

From my point of view one of the most

interesting things about the programme was the state of Paul Burnley's teeth! (Burnley, formerly of No Remorse and B&H). Is it just me or would you normally expect the spokesman for white working class nazi skinheads to have such perfect dental work? Or did Daddy pay for it?

I went down to London to see The Business play at The Garage in October. Knowing that they attract a 'dodgy element' I was interested to see them supporting Slapshot, who recently played an anti-fascist benefit in Germany. Sure enough, after a few beers the 'element'

Since then, the Sargent wannabes have put out another of those glossy mags (yawn). A right bore full of bollocks, big talk and the usual BNP slag-off but still no action from the Sargent wannabes. Still, at 12 a time, I sponge the Sargent wannabes won't go short of a drink.

STEVE SARGENT
Can't find his own area without using both hands.

His agent or fucking twat? Either way, a danger to the movement and to all of us.

(I couldn't find a good photo so I thought this would do. Still, it looks about right doesn't it?)



CHARLIE SARGENT
Fat cowardly fucker and stupid necked cunt.

He breaks a bloody window then wants 250 to slaughter a million wogel



Extracts from an anonymous pamphlet on C18; are the Sargents "MI5 agents or completely fucking stupid?"; we reckon both, kind of very, very, low budget 007's.

started discussing The Oppressed gig in Cardiff the next night and how the Welsh KKK were going to do them! The fascists are all upset because the band have just recorded a new single for AFA. Well, Roddy and the boys had a 50 strong security team waiting for the 'hooded hizbollah' (they even brought some new, improved Persil in case their pillow cases got dirty) but the fash never showed. Considering the leader of the KKK is a convicted child molester they probably had other things to do.

As you must know by now B&H has been taken over by C18, but C18 itself is now racked by rumours and ructions. John

Tyndall (BNP fuhrer) has written a 5-page article in Spearhead slagging off C18, and now an anonymous 16-page pamphlet has appeared urging fascists to "...walk up to some scum bag and pull the trigger or cut his throat..." while posing the question "...whether Charlie and Steve Sargent are MI5 agents or just poisonous shit-stirrers and completely fucking stupid can be argued about...". Personally I will reserve judgement as to who wrote this and why, but it makes a pleasant change to have this sort of internal disruption and back-stabbing on the 'other' side for a change!

Without doubt B&H makes a fair bit of money, and one of the accusations against Sargent in the C18 pamphlet mentioned above, is that he creams off the money. Judging by the pathetic first issue of 'B&H Scotland' there is certainly no money going north of the border. Alternatively the first issue of 'Australian B&H' is printed on expensive glossy paper - but there's nothing in it. The only thing of interest is that the new drummer for Brutal Attack, Tim Dogg, used to play for Sisters of Mercy and The Cult. In America there is a B&H magazine produced in Long Beach, California, but Resistance Records, and their magazine 'Resistance', is the dominant force on the fascist music scene over there. 'Resistance' is far superior to all the B&H magazines, being a full-colour 'glossy', which actively encourages 'white power' musicians in a wide variety of musical styles, and carries more 'in depth' political articles by groups like The Order, National Alliance, and Church of the Creator. Mind you, the editor is as pompous as the rest of them, writing in a recent editorial, "Adolf Hitler is considered one of the best orators in human history, by people that do not even understand German. I for one can understand very little, yet I love to sit and listen to him speak."

Steff Kelly is one of the lads sent down for the 'Welling riot' and has asked AFA groups to keep in touch. Write to: Steff Kelly, RN 0318, Elmley Prison, Eastchurch, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 4AY.

FILLING THE VACUUM

In November 1990, at a public meeting in east London, AFA declared that the "working class is the natural constituency of socialism, not fascism. Racism and socialism are incompatible. One only exists at the expense of the other. The success of the Far-Right is due to the fact that the Left are not seen as a credible option. AFA are committed to creating the space in which one [a credible alternative] can develop."

Three years later, addressing a meeting in south-east London, an AFA spokesperson returned to the theme: "While the initial aim must be to root out the organised racists/fascists - the motive force behind the attacks - and throw down a challenge to those that provide them with facilities, the long-term solution must be to create communities of resistance. By creating some space, perhaps in time a real working class alternative to the lying bullshit that now passes for politics in this country can emerge. The entire Left has failed the working class, black and white alike, though many prefer to believe that the working class has failed the Left. We are here today, not only because they [the Left] are bad socialists but more specifically because they are bad anti-fascists".

In 1994 in a widely distributed expose of the Anti-Nazi League [Don't Believe the Hype], AFA was even more specific. "The BNP can be stopped and on many

occasions up and down the country AFA has physically stopped them. However we are not blind to the fact that the fight is political, and accept that the resurgence of support for the Far-Right is a symptom of a deeper malaise. We do not see it as our job to campaign for Labour. It is not AFA's role to argue that change is not needed. The function of anti-fascism is not to see the electoral threat from the Far-Right beaten back so that Labour and the middle-class Left can, as happened between 1982-92, turn their backs on both the social causes and their own collaboration in the political betrayal that gave rise to the NF and the BNP in the first place."

The ambition of militant anti-fascism is not simply to see the Far-Right defeated and removed from working class areas: the ultimate solution is to see them replaced there. The BNP's attack on Labour is from the Right and is racist, ultra-conservative and anti-working class. Our primary role is to guarantee that a successful challenge to Labour comes only from the Left. Furthermore, and purely from an anti-fascist point of view, as the best insurance against any Nazi renaissance, it would be the duty of militants to offer protection and encouragement to any genuine [anti-Labour] working class revolt.

When AFA was relaunched in London in September 1989 it was accepted that while AFA was still organised around the

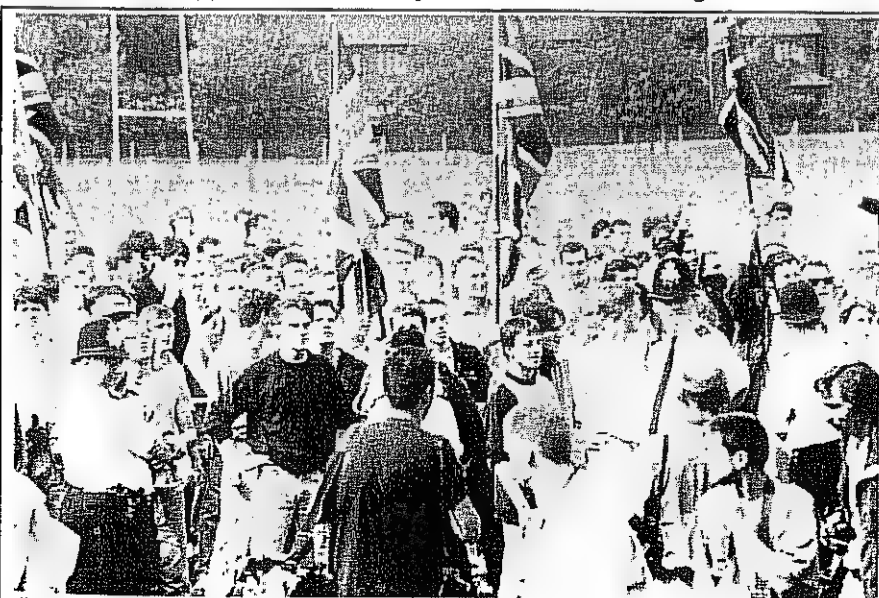
single issue of anti-fascism, "AFA propaganda must contain a class message" in order "to negate the efforts by the fascists to present AFA as a bunch of middle-class outsiders, part and parcel of the Establishment, working in the long-term interests of the status quo".

Much has changed since 1989, not least the fact that AFA is now a national organisation with over forty branches organised in four main regions each with the physical ability to forcefully implement AFA's founding statement on the streets. In addition other organisations such as the ANL, ARA and YRE have jumped on - and off - the bandwagon. The early nineties also saw the return to electoral prominence of the Far-Right not just in Britain but throughout Europe. The success of AFA on the streets also led to the birth of the wannabe paramilitary grouping C18.

In another tribute to AFA's militant strategy the BNP declared in April 1994 that there would be "...no more marches, meetings, punch-ups..." A year on, this declaration must now be regarded as a serious change of strategy, something other than a temporary electoral ploy or an effort to court respectability. There appear to be at least two crucial reasons for the change of strategy. One, undoubtedly, is that since their resurgence to national prominence, AFA have fought the BNP to a standstill. In 1991 Scotland was regarded by the BNP leadership as its highest growth area and the area with possibly the greatest potential. Today the BNP no longer visibly exists. Literally beaten into the ground by anti-fascist militants.

In the North West the BNP organisation and morale has all but been destroyed. A similar pattern is emerging in the Midlands. In the South East the fascists have been constantly harassed. Apart from the east and possibly south east they are practically invisible in London.

In many of these areas the politics of the BNP undoubtedly have a resonance, but they are unable to take advantage of the latent support due to the logistical problems caused by the constant possibility of attack and their own profile as 'a party of strength'. One way to resolve the problem would be to recruit, but they cannot have open recruitment



"...the politics of the BNP undoubtedly have a resonance..." - where the Left allow them to, as at Bermondsey 1991. Militant anti-fascism prevents this but cannot replace it.

for fear of infiltration. In addition the fear of physical violence means that they are unable to bring their more articulate middle class supporters onto the streets for fear of losing them entirely.

The situation in Europe would also have played an influence. Here the fascists, particularly in Austria and Italy, have recognised that with the demise of the support for the communist parties there is no need for a visibly menacing counter-threat. If there is no physical danger, fascists do not need to hide behind a sinister private army. The battle for control of the streets need not be fought if control is not being contested. If the end can be achieved without the traditional means there is no need for the rough stuff. In Britain, with the absence of any tangible political threat to their adopted working class constituency the argument for a physical force movement to contest the streets becomes not only void but instead represents a serious impediment to their own political ambitions - only!

Since their meteoric climb in 1990 in not one area of the country, despite significant sympathy on the ground, have they for more than one day at a time been able to control the streets; Bermondsey, Bloody Sunday and the Isle of Dogs being the exceptions. More often than not in regard to the large set pieces they have been humiliated. And even when they have won, the victory has gained them nothing except a confirmation of what already sustains them; that Labour and the Left are increasingly alien to working class people. So in a sense for them simply to continue with the strategy of "marches, meetings, punch ups" only provides an enemy that has already lost the fundamental arguments - Labour/ANL/Trotskyism, etc. (or in the case of AFA which has failed to put an argument) - with a legitimate political excuse/focus, ie: anti-BNP. The BNP policy of open swaggering aggression also affords an organisation like AFA a legitimate opportunity to answer in kind, and in doing so physically destroy the BNP's political prospects by crippling its infra-structure. With AFA having no political prospects of its own they are on a hiding to nothing.

It takes two to tango, so what of AFA's reason for being if the BNP decide that they don't want to play anymore? Certainly in London, AFA has only been able to seriously damage the Far-Right once recently. If this is a permanent change of plan there is a serious danger that AFA, without the physical challenge for which it was designed, will itself begin to lose direction and begin to atrophy.



"The BNP then might reasonably expect, in return for their collaboration with the forces of law and order, that the tactic of summary arrest be employed against AFA on a consistent basis. Circumstances are changing and AFA needs to adapt".

The flip side of the coin is that C18, who have no electoral ambitions either, don't do anything but 'play'. The ideal solution for both the State and the Far-Right would be for AFA to get locked into a clandestine gang war with C18, thereby allowing the State to select candidates of their own choosing for periods of lengthy incarceration. That done, the now entirely legal BNP could go about their lawful business like their European counterparts, articulating 'genuine racial concerns' unhindered.

Furthermore, if the BNP operation is made entirely legal and if AFA physically opposes them, then our operation is de facto illegal. The BNP then might reasonably expect, in return for their collaboration with the forces of law and order, that the tactic of summary arrest be employed against AFA on a consistent basis. Circumstances are changing and AFA needs to adapt.

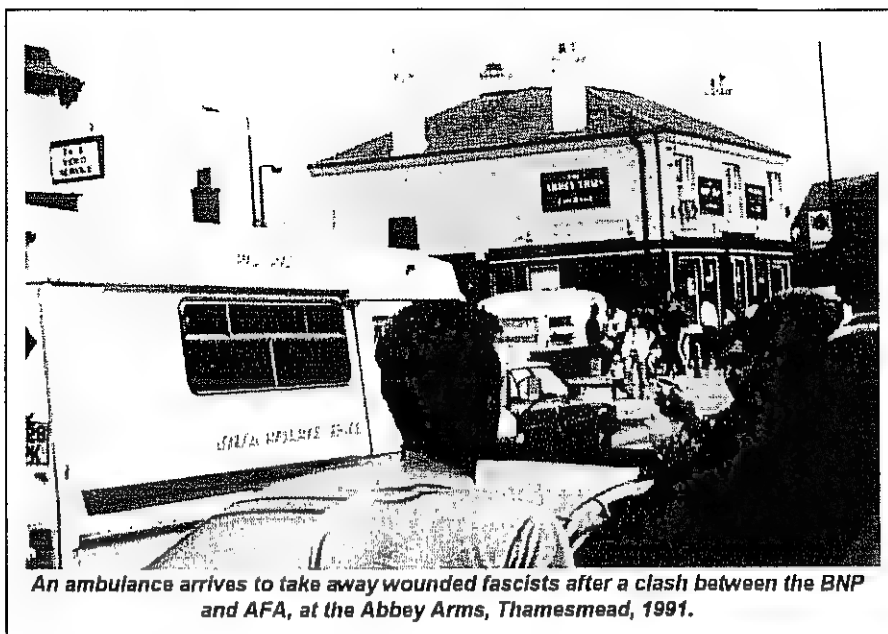
Fascism is the vanguard of reaction. It is at once the manifestation, the contributory cause and principle beneficiary of society's decomposition. Unlike the rest of the anti-racist Left, AFA's emphasis has always been on the political danger represented by fascism, while others such as Searchlight and the ANL have laid the emphasis on their violent and criminal tendencies. In addition they refuse or are unwilling to recognise that anti-fascism is by definition a rearguard action and that fascism is the consequence, rather than the cause, of the Left's failure. Inevitably the

strategies adopted to combat fascism carry with them the germs of the strategies that caused fascism, invariably leading to compound failure. So while it cannot be denied that the ANL's media campaign focused public attention on the problem, it also proved to be a distraction in regard to the solution.

One of AFA's strengths in its formative years was its limited platform; the 'single issue'. This concentration weeded out or repelled the sectarians, the 'tough talkers' and the dilettantes. However, during the Isle of Dogs campaign, the 'single issue' exposed AFA's limitations. AFA had to nothing to say on the principle business.

AFA has long recognised that once the Far-Right is allowed to mobilise, is allowed to set the agenda, and has passed a certain point, they begin to control their own destinies - and their opponent's. Once that point is reached it would be useless and possibly counter-productive to rely upon a purely anti-fascist stance, primarily because people look to politics for solutions. It might be clear what you stand against, though their understanding of what you stand for will effectively determine their overall response.

As the activities of the ANL on the Isle of Dogs demonstrated (despite blanket canvassing the BNP vote actually rose by 30%), an anti-fascist message on its own would find little favour with working class people, even those repelled by the BNP, if they suspected that it was simply a spoiling tactic, carried out by allies of



An ambulance arrives to take away wounded fascists after a clash between the BNP and AFA, at the Abbey Arms, Thamesmead, 1991.

the local Labour establishment in an effort to maintain the status quo. AFA has never fought to maintain the status quo, but, even at their most effective, anti-fascist militants can never hope to achieve anything more than to maintain that vacuum. There is little doubt that the vacuum has been successfully maintained but now, in the absence of any other suitable candidates, it is incumbent on the anti-fascist militants to help fill the vacuum themselves.

The working class is increasingly alienated from Labour, the BNP's strategy is entirely reliant upon this alienation: 'they really hate Labour' etc. The total ineptitude and the tangible contempt that exists in some areas between Labour and its former constituency has locally and nationally begat the BNP. And fascism begat anti-fascism. In straight-forward language, it is the politics of the Labour Party that has created the BNP. So by acting as campaign managers for Labour, the ANL/YRE are prostituting anti-fascism, and instead of being identified with a radical, pro-working class position, anti-fascism is seen to be defending the status quo, thereby practically forcing people who want change to vote BNP, out of sheer desperation. They are literally driving people into the arms of the fascists. Up to now it is entirely due to the cutting edge of AFA that the passive support has remained just that. But it is unrealistic to expect that vacuum to be maintained indefinitely.

Nor as working class militant anti-fascists can we stand on the sidelines, wringing our hands hopelessly. We have to take a stand. And we have to take that stand against Labour. Not simply in a theoretical sense, but in an organisational sense. It is vital that the working class on

the estates, seriously alienated from Labour, are provided with an alternative to the BNP. The election of a Labour government will be a massive shot in the arm for the Far-Right. It is also very possible that in the subsequent local elections the 'Isle of Dogs' scenario could be repeated on a national scale, and all our good work in the last decade would be undone at a stroke.

What is needed is a new organisation. In all probability the impetus of the Clause Four controversy will cause a realignment on the Left that will give it birth. It is not being suggested that AFA disband and becomes this organisation. It is as vital as ever, that AFA maintains its own structures and agenda. Nor is it being suggested that AFA create this new organisation. This would hardly be possible in any case. What must be recognised is that it will happen with or without AFA. AFA contains the best working class militants in the country. It is absolutely vital that in order to shape the organisation in its own image, AFA is in from the very beginning. To shape it in AFA's own image would mean stipulating from the outset: a) a democratic structure, built from the bottom up rather than from the top down; b) rather than appeal to a mythical 'labour movement' the strategy requires an orientation to, and an accommodation of, the working class proper; c) non-sectarian. This does not mean being forced to work with everybody; it means working alongside others towards a common goal, but making no apology for a refusal to collaborate on any project for which you have no enthusiasm, or with those with whom you fundamentally disagree.

In any case it must be obvious that to stand aloof would be an unmitigated

disaster. That would allow the middle classes once again to set the agenda. AFA has been dealing with the consequences of their agenda for over a decade. It would be criminally negligent to allow our adversaries to fill the space we have created and maintained in that time. This is an opportunity to add a string to AFA's bow. It will be a complement to, rather than a deviation from, vigorous anti-fascist activity.

Even on a limited tactical basis the benefits of an independent working class organisation operating alongside AFA would be immediate and widespread. AFA could, for the first time, campaign for something instead of merely campaigning against something - and campaign legally.

AFA could be pro-active as well as reactive. There would be no breathing space for the likes of the BNP. And, for as much as an embryonic association might welcome AFA's physical presence, the situation demands that AFA avails itself of a wider political platform than was hitherto considered either necessary or available. For the first time since the thirties militant anti-fascism would be associated with solutions rather than simply violent actions and threats. For the first time, too, involved with setting the agenda rather than clearing up the political mess left by someone else's.

Ultimately the challenge for AFA is not only to destroy the BNP in working class areas but to replace them there. So the political message, to have resonance, will have to be deeper and more comprehensive. A straight forward anti-fascist parable, a simple refutation of the 'radical' in nationalistic will, on its own, prove unsatisfactory.

If AFA's efforts are to culminate in victory we must seek to replace them, but to replace them we must not only out-violence them, we must also out-radicalise them.

This article is a strategy document that was endorsed by London AFA in May 1995. It is currently being discussed by other AFA groups around the country, and has already been agreed by the Midlands Region and the Northern Network. Discussions are taking place with other organisations with regard to setting up an independent working class organisation.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES



FT's Bill Gothrocks examines the writings of the current leadership of British Fascism...

When I'm picking my way through the dustbin of fascist propaganda, reflecting on the disturbing task assigned to me, it's always cheering to wander across some piece of silliness masquerading as establishing the 'English Cultural Identity'. The BNP elections officer, Eddy Butler (who's only beaten by Tyndall in vain pomposity), begins one such article in July's *Spearhead*:

"When thinking of Anglo-Saxon Literature (if at all in this day and age!) one usually remembers Beowulf... The Heroic sagas can stir our northern blood, but for familiarity, nothing can rival the riddles of Old Albion."

Familiar indeed Eddy. I was reminiscing with my mate Dan W. only the other day, about the nights out on the moors when we'd get all woaded-up and listen to the old shepherd telling the tale of *Beowulf*, fondly remembering those immortal lines:

*Hwear! we Gar-Dena in geardagum
theodcyninga thrym gefrunon
Of Scyld Scefing sceathena threatum
monegum maegthum meodosetla
ofeah
(Beowulf, Lines 745-748)*

Just typing it in brings it all flooding back to me. In the same issue a certain Dr. William Hurst, in an article titled *The Psychology of Success*, passionately argues:

"Anyone whoever doubts the fundamental destiny of the white race should listen to the fourth movement of Beethoven's ninth (choral) symphony, Wagner's Sigfried or Verdi's Requiem. Then let them say whether the white race is worth fighting for!"

After gathering together the staff at FT and playing them the aforementioned tunes, even after a crate of lagers, they could still say that the 'White Race' wasn't worth a shite. Maybe we should have been wearing uniforms or something?

The article itself is (allegedly) serious in its content though. It's illustrated with pictures of the England cricket teams of the 1990's, and then the 1950's, and argues that the former failed where the latter succeeded, because they dressed for success, and is telling BNP members to smarten up their act.

"The importance of dress standards is clearly understood by our political opponents, who... wear the clothing of professional people, ie. Business suits. This signifies to the public that they take their job seriously and can be trusted with the serious business of power."

One word of warning, the tailoring tradition of this country may mean you'll have to buy second-hand! There is a significance here however, as the BNP are getting more ambitious about what they might achieve:

"The lesson for the BNP is obvious; having succeeded in winning over the working class, we must now target the eighty per cent or so of society who fall into the 'middle Britain' category. (Paul Andrews, The Battle for Hearts and Minds, Spearhead, May 1995).

And after doing fairly well in the local elections in that month, there's this indicator in their 'newspaper' *British Nationalist*, talking up the vote (10.1%) for a female candidate, Isobel Hernon, in the Debden Green Ward of Epping in Essex:

"If the BNP can get an excellent vote in Debden, then it can do so in innumerable other areas all over the country far away from the heavily immigrant inner cities. The Party's potential is based on a wide range of policies, and does not depend on an anti-immigrant vote." (British Nationalist, June 1995.)

A point that AFA has consistently made about fascism; that racism isn't 'part and parcel' but a tactic, is clearly echoed. What we can see are the BNP's attempts to shift gear and work itself into the 'mainstream'; "no more meetings, punch

ups" etc... With this in mind, anti-fascists should be thinking about the following with regards to the next general election.

"...the best strategy available to the BNP was to target for a 50-seat campaign in order to get broadcasting time and achieve the greatest possible distribution of its election literature rather than to concentrate in fewer areas so as to maximise votes." (Spearhead, September 1995)

The September issue of *Spearhead* also carried a five-page article by Tyndall on the 'infamous' C18, effectively calling for their destruction. There's a lot of detail, and plenty of nonsense, but the following snippets caught my attention:

"The purported objective of Combat 18 was said to be 'direct action'. In other words, the enemies of nationalism needed to be singled out and attacked, not just with words but literally and physically...."

Such a concept was bound to have a seductive ring to nationalists... How many of us, if we are honest, would claim that we would lose sleep at night knowing that a few of these pieces of garbage who had terrorised our people had been given a dose of their own medicine?

But at the same time it was equally plain that the BNP would have to disassociate itself from any such activities..."

That says, to this writer at least, that C18 on its inception had actually been given the tacit nod by the BNP leadership, only to prove itself a 'frankenstein's monster'. On the other hand they were given the go ahead so that they'd put themselves in the frame; in BNP terms the violent element which they once cultivated are now externalised, and the BNP, as a result, more 'respectable'.

I haven't covered the NF in this issue because I'm awaiting developments. What you might like to know if you haven't yet heard, they've changed their name to the 'National Democrats', or at least Anderson's mob has. We'll try to get the full update for the next FT.

I'll leave you with another classic Tyndall gaff:

"This writer's advice to everyone, therefore, is that when a man comes running up to you waving a placard which talks of 'rights' - be immediately on 'our guard!'" (Tyndall, Time to Terminate the Rights Racket, Spearhead May 1995).

Especially if it says "Rights for Whites".



GERMANY CALLING

The situation with regards to the court case against alleged members of the Autonome Antifa (M) in Germany remains complicated (see previous issues of FT). It seems the German State remains determined to continue the attack...

After having brought charges against 17 alleged members of the Autonome Antifa (M) in February this year followed by judicial squabble, the Federal High Court dropped the charge falling under §129a (propaganda for a terrorist organization) which was mainly based on a poster that showed the blown-up prison of Weiterstadt bombed by the RAF (Red Army Faction) among other images and pictures. The poster had announced a public meeting with former prisoners of the RAF and others. The charge falling under §129 (building of a criminal organization) is permitted to the main proceedings. Although the dropping of the §129a charges can be judged as success, the political interests of the state concerning the proceedings are obvious.

Background

After the State Prosecutor (GSA) had brought the original charges according to §129 and §129a, the State Supreme Court (OLG) decided not to open the trials according to §§129/129a. According to the State Supreme Court the Autonome Antifa (M) was neither a criminal organization nor have they propagated the RAF. In their opinion the poster was propaganda for the Anti-Fascist Action rather than the RAF.

The State Prosecutor of course was not at all satisfied with the decision of the State Supreme Court. Most of the charges were dropped and their hard and tenacious work seemed pointless. 115 investigation files, four years of observation and at least 13,929 tapped telephone calls without being able to construct a "criminal organization" drove the State Prosecutor mad, so they lodged a complaint and called the Federal High Court to make the final decision. The Federal High Court dropped the charge according to §129a but pointed out that the Autonome Antifa (M) is under

suspicion of being a "criminal organization". So they gave order to open the trial according to §129 at the Lüneburg District Court. A special judicial division called "state security chamber" will be responsible for the trial, a division that has dealt with several political court cases in the past e.g. cases against the anti-nuclear movement.

More Repression

This year on June 13th a nation-wide raid against 55 objects took place. The searches were aimed at the autonomous magazine "radikal", the "Antimperialistische Zellen" (anti-imperialist cells), who are responsible for two attacks on conservative politicians and the "K.O.M.I.T.E.E." that is also responsible for several attacks, e.g. a failed attack on a deportation prison near Berlin. Four people that are called responsible for the magazine "radikal" were taken to prison the same day and are still neither released, nor have they received their bills of indictment. Another person is in coercive detention because he refused to testify.

The Federal Minister of Justice admitted, when she had to answer a question in parliament asked by the "Greens" that the public enemy is still seen on the Left. According to her answer, "the Federal Prosecutor is at the moment following 105 preliminary proceedings against Left extremists and 2 preliminary proceedings against Right extremists".

In the year of the fiftieth anniversary of the defeat over Nazi-Germany, when the state is trying to gain a democratic and kind of anti-fascist image, the repression against the radical Left has increased.

Arson Attacks on "Junge Freiheit"

The "Junge Freiheit" represents a forum for people of the so-called New Right. Fascist ideas are supposed to become

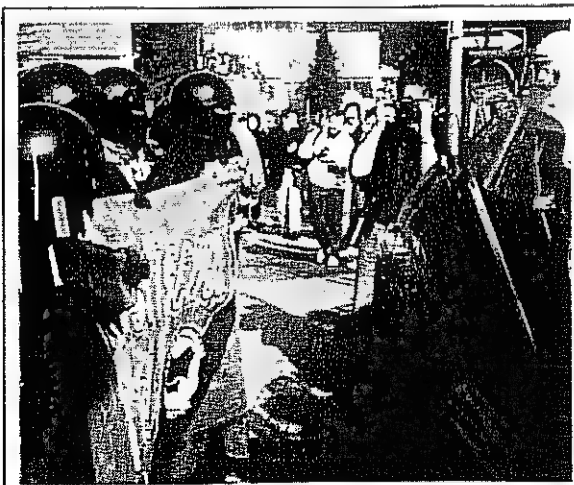
socially accepted by using an intellectual image. Not only members of neo-fascist organizations write for the paper but also people from conservative organizations.

In December 1994, a printing company in Weimar (Weimarer Union-Druckerei) that prints the "Junge Freiheit", a news stand that sells the weekly and the vehicles of distribution companies were set fire to. The total damage of all actions was 2.5 million Marks. The printers cancelled the contract with the "Junge Freiheit" because the 33 employees couldn't be expected to bare such danger. Two "revolutionary women-lesbian groups and other revolutionary groups" claimed responsibility, according to a published declaration. The Federal Prosecutor immediately started investigations against some "terrorist organization" according to §129a. Ten people engaged in the Weimar squatting movement were summoned as witnesses in May. Except for one person, all of them didn't attend. In June, they were picked up by the State Criminal Office (LKA) for questioning. Four of the witnesses were then accused of having been involved in the attack.

Consequences

The trial against the Autonome Antifa (M) will be one of the biggest against autonomous Anti-Fascists with long-term consequences. Not only the Autonome Antifa (M) and the accused 17 have to be defended but rather the politics that are meant to be illegalized. The future of the radical anti-fascist movement depends on the ending of the trials. If the Autonome Antifa (M) was condemned as a "criminal organization", every group that organizes itself in a similar way and carries out the same political approach would run the risk of becoming criminalised.

In International Anti-Fascist Solidarity
Autonome Antifa (M)



A QUESTION OF SPORT

The 1936 Olympics, Berlin versus Barcelona

The 20th century has been described as the century of mass sport. In the 1920's and the 1930's the dictatorships of Fascist Italy and, especially, Nazi Germany used mass sport as an arm of their foreign policy and as a propaganda tool.

These regimes also recognised the military uses of sport in producing an athletically healthy nation, and the conveyor belt link between sport in schools, athletics clubs and the military was explicitly encouraged, reinforced and promoted by the Nazi regime in Germany.

In 1932 the International Olympic Committee awarded the hosting of the 11th modern Olympics to Germany. In 1933 Hitler and the Nazis came to power in Germany and, as a small part of the regime's destruction of democratic and progressive forces, began banning political dissidents (mainly communists and socialists) and Jews from membership of sporting clubs and organisations, and from participating in the sporting life of the nation.

The Nazis intended the 1936 Berlin Olympics (as well as the winter Olympics at Garmisch-Partenkirchen) to be one of the most carefully orchestrated

propaganda events of the century, where German athletes would be seen as soldiers in the propaganda war and every medal won would equal more respectability for the Nazi regime. The Nazis explicitly cloaked the Olympics in political and military garb, and used them as a showpiece to the world of German engineering skill, cultural taste and athletic prowess. By successfully doing this they scored a significant propaganda victory and hid the reality of what was going on in Germany.

The Nazis abolished the idea of the individual sports-person and had openly declared that "non-political, so-called neutral sportsmen are unthinkable in Hitler's State" and that "National Socialism cannot permit even a single phase of life to remain outside the general organisation of the nation... Every athlete and sportsman in the Third Reich must serve the State and contribute to the production of a standard National Socialist human body.. All athletic associations must receive instructions in politics and philosophy from the Political Organisation or from the Labour Front.. Athletics and sport are the preparatory school of political driving power in the service of the State."

This clearly political, and well publicised

position, had no affect on the International Olympic Committee or most of their national counter-parts who chose to ignore the realities of life inside the Nazi state.

Working class sports movements in countries across the world, as well as Left and progressive parties and trade unions, tried to organise a boycott of the Nazi Olympics in the face of opposition from the Establishment. They did this either because of their anti-fascism or out of a sense that the Olympic 'ideal' would be compromised by holding the games in a state so at odds with the ideas of amateur sport and internationalism.

Although the Nazi policy of discrimination against non-Aryans and its explicit anti-Semitism was well known to the international community, the official reasons for not taking the games away from Berlin were that they been awarded to the city when Germany was still a 'democracy' and because politics should be kept out of sport. The American Olympic Committee President even went on record as saying, "Certain Jews must now understand that they cannot use these Games as a weapon in their boycott against the Nazis."

Without the support of most governments, and most athletic governing bodies, the boycott movement failed to succeed except in republican Spain where the government boycotted Berlin and gave full support to the opposing Barcelona Olympics.

The support of the international community in allowing the Olympics to proceed is bewildering until put into the context of the time. Most governments were more concerned with events in the Soviet Union than with Nazi Germany and most national sporting bodies were controlled by elites who had more sympathy with Fascism rather than communism.

The actions of the British Establishment provide a good example. In 1938 the British Foreign Office was behind the decision of the Football Association to



The England football team saluting Hitler in the Berlin stadium in 1938.

instruct the English national side to give the Nazi salute in a match against the German national side. However in 1930 when the British Workers Sports Federation invited a Soviet miners' football team to tour Britain the Labour Home Secretary refused to grant entry to the Soviet footballers for fear of the propaganda value such a visit would have for the workers movement.

The Berlin Olympics went ahead and as shown by cinema of the time (such as the film *Olympia* 1936), the Nazis successfully blended national socialist ideals with Olympic images and scored the propaganda victory they had wanted.

As with most aspects of anti-fascist history, there is a hidden and little known side to the events of 1936; the Barcelona Workers Olympics which were to have been held in opposition to the Nazi Olympics. There was also a different philosophy to sport which opposed the exclusive and racist ideal of sport exemplified by the Nazis. This was the idea of workers' oppositional sport, combining the ideas of sport with socialist comradeship.

In the 1890's a workers' sports movement began to emerge. In Germany the Workers Gymnastic Association was founded in conscious opposition to the nationalistic German Gymnastic Society and soon the German workers sport movement had over 350,000 members. In Britain the British Workers Cycling Club was organised round the cycling and socialism newspaper 'The Clarion.' By 1913 there were enough members for the workers sports federations of Germany, Belgium, France, Italy and Britain to set up the Socialist Physical Culture International.

The popularity of these working class sports associations can be seen by the size of the events they organised. In 1925 in Frankfurt 150,000 people attended the first Workers Olympics, six years later 100,000 athletes competed in Vienna (an event which was open to all and watched by a quarter of a million people), at the second Workers Olympics.

By 1930 the workers sports movement united well over 4 million people and was the largest working-class cultural organisation in the world. Workers' sports associations existed in almost every country in Europe and in many parts of North and South America and Asia. Five years later in 1936 in opposition to

the Nazi Olympics an even larger Workers Olympics was planned for Barcelona.

The workers sports movement was riven almost from the start by the splits between socialists and communists that affected the workers movement at the time. Under attack from fascism the socialists and communists at last came together in a popular front and jointly organised the third Workers Olympics.

The official object of the Barcelona games was "to counter the Berlin Games with a popular sports festival which does not hope for record feats, but intends to preserve the true Olympic spirit of peace and co-operation between nations". The only condition for entry to the Barcelona Olympics was the possession of "the sporting spirit and an honest will against fascism".

The Spanish Olympic Committee declared it would boycott the Nazi Olympics and promises of attendance were received from athletes (1,000 French, 150 Swiss, 100 Soviet, 41 British, 12 American, 6 Canadian etc.) from across the world.

The approach of the Berlin Olympics did not stop political developments or Hitler's plans for war against Bolshevism. On June 25th he had received emissaries from Franco and within 24 hours he had despatched Luftwaffe transport planes to Morocco to bring anti-Republican troops to Spain. Less than a week before the beginning of the Olympic festival Nazi Germany's resources were being made available to overthrow the democratically elected Spanish Government.

The third Workers Olympics never took place. On the morning of the scheduled opening ceremony the Spanish Fascists launched their counter revolution and started the Spanish Civil War. Some foreign athletes stayed in Spain to fight the fascists and many athletes who returned home found they were banned by their national sporting federations. In contrast many of the athletes who went and gave the Nazi salute to Hitler in

Berlin were greeted as national heroes. Many sportsmen, such as Sam Masters, joined the International Brigade and some, such as Clem Beckett, George Brown, Walter Tapsell, Tom Darban and Ray Cox, gave their lives in Spain fighting against the Fascists. During the Spanish Civil War large sections of the British working class rallied to the defence of Spain not only with political and financial assistance but also continued sporting links and 'sport aid'. Typically the Foreign Office banned a proposed visit of a British football team to Catalonia on the grounds of the non-intervention pact (whilst ignoring German and Italian military aid to Franco's rebels).

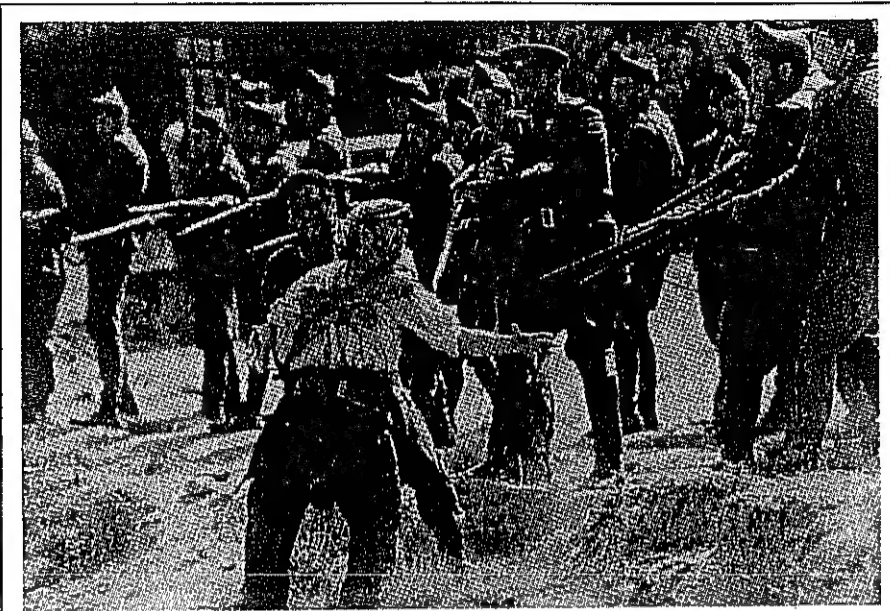
What this whole episode shows is that sport and politics are closely linked. The refusal to boycott the Berlin Olympics in 1936 contrasts sharply with the US-led boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980. 'Appeasement' - or collaboration - with Nazi Germany was the name of the game in 1936, with western governments sympathetic to the hardline anti-communism of the Nazi regime. A boycott of the Berlin games was not in their interest.

While Hitler was able to use the 1936 Olympics as a major propaganda exercise, by 1980, the politics of the Cold War determined that the Soviet Union had to be denied the same opportunity - hence the Moscow boycott. What the attempted anti-fascist Olympics in Barcelona did was to expose the hypocrisy of these capitalist governments; happy to go along with the explicitly pro-Nazi Berlin event, but crying 'foul' when it came to Barcelona. Politics must be kept out of sport they demanded, but all they really meant was that left-wing politics must be excluded. A familiar story, even today.



LAND AND FREEDOM

Ken Loach, 1995, GB/SP/GER. 109 mins (15)



Renowned for his gritty social commentaries such as 'Riff Raff' and 'Raining Stones', Ken Loach's latest work 'Land and Freedom' is his most ambitious and expensive to date. The film is based around events that took place during the Spanish Civil War, and though it is obviously an anti-fascist piece, ultimately the main target in Loach's sights are those he regards as 'Stalinists' and he is uncompromising in his condemnation of them for the repression of the militias.

The story begins when a young woman finds her grandfather dying of a heart attack in his run-down council block, a place spattered with racist and anti-racist graffiti. When she returns to clear out his flat she comes across a suitcase full of memorabilia, newspaper cuttings, photographs, and his letters to his fiancée. It is through these letters that 'David's' story is narrated.

'Land and Freedom' charts David's journey from youthful idealism, when unemployed at a Communist Party meeting in Liverpool he volunteers to join the fight against Franco, through to eventual despair and disillusionment as he finds himself on the run, denounced as a deserter by the very government he had gone to support in Spain. After travelling across the Pyrenees, David ends up not in the CP's International Brigades but in the revolutionary Left's POUM militia, but as he points out "we're all fighting on the same side". He soon settles into this people's army where there is no saluting and all major

decisions are arrived at by voting.

Despite their lack of decent equipment they take part in a number of daring raids against the fascists. When the Popular Government continues to withhold weapons from the POUM, David is injured by his own antiquated rifle and is sent to Barcelona. While recuperating he decides he can do more in the war against the fascists by throwing in his lot with the Government's regular Popular Army, and so joins the International Brigades. Before he can see action against the fascists he is caught up in the turmoil of an anti-fascist 'civil war' and is drafted into Government forces who are moving against the militias. Disillusioned, David returns to the front and rejoins his comrades in the POUM, where they continue to fight until they are forcibly disarmed by the Government.

Despite being heavy on the polemic the film never drags, never loses sight of the need to entertain, and despite its heavy subject matter still finds time to make you laugh. The battle scenes, though never on an epic scale, are amongst some of the most realistic I've seen. Mounting an assault on a village held by the fascists, amateur militia fighters take on conscripted troops in a war where even from twenty yards they are more likely to miss than kill each other, while civilians are caught up in the resultant chaos. The highlight actually comes about after the village is liberated. After executing the priest the peasants take over his luxurious house where they set about debating

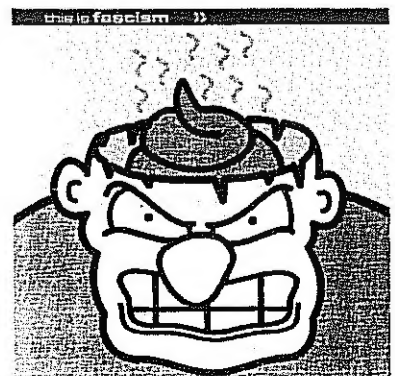
what they should actually do with the land that is now theirs. In many ways that is the real strength of the movie, that rare ability to accurately portray the hopes, aspirations, and motivation of ordinary men and women attempting to determine their own future.

Loach's attention to detail, along with his winning formula that uses virtually unknown actors, Ian Hart and Rosana Pastor are excellent (as their love affair is interwoven into the action), who play their own nationalities gives the film an authenticity that Hollywood could never achieve. Loach is totally forthright in his belief that the betrayal of the Spanish Civil War lies squarely at the door of the 'Stalinists'. That he has created a masterpiece burning with passion, power, anger and emotion cannot be denied. For readers of Fighting Talk, whether Loach is historian or heretic will largely depend on your political standpoint.

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Freedom of Movement are set to embark on a series of benefits up and down the country to coincide with the approaching launch of their long-awaited album, 'This is Fascism', which includes remixes by the following DJs and Artists: D-I-Y, Justin Robertson, New FADS, Meat Beat Manifesto, Consolidated, Coldcut, United Spirits of Rhythm, CPU, Drum Club, David Holmes, Jonny Moy, and the Blood Brothers.

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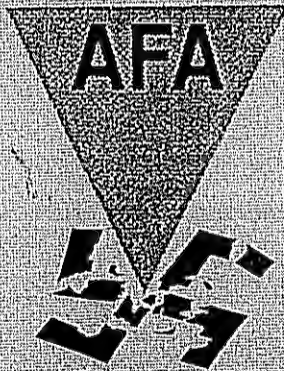
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